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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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THE ECHO;

OR

THE BATTLE OF THE SHELLS,

A SATIRICAL PARODY IN RHYME

OF THE

CELEBRATED LETTERS

OF

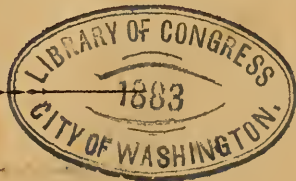
MESSRS. GUTHRIE, BRONSON & O'CONOR,

TOGETHER WITH

3 THE ORIGINAL LETTERS:

~~~~~  
"VELL MY COVY, VOT'S THE ROW?"  
~~~~~

✓
BY JOHN PIPER, Esq., &c. &c.



JANUARY:

1854.

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P R E F A C E .

JOHN PIPER'S compliments to the reader, and hopes he will be pardoned for this intrusion. John Piper thought it a pity the letters of Messrs. GUTHRIE, BRONSON and O'CONOR should fall upon the public ear without an echo. He has, therefore, echoed them. John Piper feels well assured of one of two things, either the rhymes will immortalize the letters or the letters will immortalize the rhymes. John don't care a fig which, being perfectly satisfied with either.

Baltimore, January, 1854.

THE ECHO

OR THE

Battle of the Shells.

Invocation.

ECHO! awake from slumber sweet,
And to the wondering world repeat
How Guthrie hit with might and main
At Bronson, who struck back again.
How Charles O'Connor made a dash,
And knocked the Union all to smash.
Or Hard or Soft, come sound thy shell
And all their deeds of glory tell,
In combat deadlier far to see
Than Sullivan's with Morissey; *a*
'Till savage Guthrie, with a growl,
Hit the poor Collector foul
And stretched him senseless on the floor,
To appoint and write and fight no more.

The Secretary to the Collector.

ECHO.

SIR, since I talked with you 'twould seem,
Our party's union is a dream;
And now, about this sad division,
I wish to say with more precision;

(*a*) See Appendix.

The President is not contented,
 Because it should have been prevented.
 Let Russia take her slice of Turkey, *b*
 Our sailors rot in dungeons murky, *c*
 Let Santa Anna, sans rebuke, *d*
 Follow the lead of bold Solouque ;
 And, proud in his imperial car,
 Rival Napoleon and the Czar.
 Let England with her shrewd intriguers *e*
 Turn over Cuba to the niggers.
 The party's principles require
 That we should look a little higher.
 For having power, now our care
 Should be to keep it and to share.
 But you, a true dog in the manger,
 Our party's principles endanger.
 You will not let a Soft Shell nib
 A morsel from the public crib.
 You know it was the sole intention
 Of the Baltimore Convention,
 To get control of public plunder,
 This joined those who were asunder.
 Then surely now half of the spoil
 Should go to those who went free soil ;
 And to this course, which you have scorned,
 The President is pledged and pawned ;
 The less 's included in the greater,
 Just as the skin contains the tater,
 As his subordinate, dear Judge,
 You are included in his pledge.
 'Tis plain and palpable, you see,
 As proposition e'er can be.
 True 'tis a pity, pity its true,
 The offices are quite too few
 For all who voted right, but yet
 The President and Cabinet,
 Consider them, or sharps or flats,
 Or Hards or Softs, good democrats ;

And such, dear Judge, accordingly,
 You must acknowledge them to be :
 And show it in the only way
 Can prove to us you mean fair play.
 That is, as nearly as can be,
 Distribute place impartially.
 And though you can't give every man
 A sop out of the public pan ;
 You can, as far's the soup'll go,
 Serve Hard and Soft alike, you know ;
 If you pursue this plan 'tis plain,
 Things may be well enough again.

That all may know the true intent
 Of our glorious President,
 This letter, copied, shall be sent
 To th' Naval Officer and Surveyor,
 And to—oh ! no, not to the Mayor.
 And, now sir, most respectfully,
 I am yours, truly,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

The Collector to the Secretary.

ECHO.

BUSINESS requiring my attention
 Was, my dear sir, one prevention,
 Why you've not had a quicker answer ;
 Besides, being sick, it was my plan, sir,
 To wait, until a little better,
 Before I undertook your letter ;
 And, having pondered it on Sunday,
 I now reply to it on Monday.

You first, in substance, state that I
 Am bound and pledged to give away
 To applicants, without regard
 To their being Soft or Hard,

My offices all equally ;
 If they claim democrats to be.
 And, from your letter, it would seem
 I've failed this pledge yet to redeem.
 You then lay out, in order due,
 The course you wish me to pursue.

The fact is, and I soon will show it,
 I did not want the place, you know it.
 But got it, as some people catch
 That vulgar thing they call the itch,
 Like many frail misguided fair,
 Was great before I was aware.
 The platform, which was late erected
 At Baltimore, I have inspected ;
 Though some were rough and some were rare,
 I could not find a Soft plank there.
 I therefore, willingly agree
 To all that platform claims to be :
 Considering it a first rate plan ;
 And General Pierce a gentleman.

My little offices I gave,
 With all the ability I have,
 To democrats, good men and true,
 I did the best that I could do.
 The Hards, being most, got most, you see,
 But this is no apology,
 To apologise is not my task,
 And favors I have none to ask.
 The consequences which may follow
 The party's breach, that beats me hollow,
 What things may tread upon its heels,
 Although I was Judge of Appeals, *f*
 I must take time, ere I decide,
 In quick decisions I've no pride.
 Yet this I know, that with fair play,
 We'd flax the Softs out any day ;
 But, 'twixt the President and you,
 Fair play for us is not in view.

Let me now notice, as is better
 Time, manner and motive of your letter :
 The aforesaid letter, you well know,
 Was sent to me, after the row ;
 Then what in thunder could I do ?
 The appointments were already made,
 And the Convention's game was played.
 Was it for me to take new stitches, *g*
 In this old split in Marcy's breeches ?
 If you judged thus your judgment 's lame,
 I'm not so green, though Greene's my name.
 As to the manner, 'tis alone
 To me that you assume this tone ;
 You send no circular to Collectors,
 About the appointment of Inspectors,
 District Attorneys and Post Masters,
 Marshals, all escape your plasters,
 To me, alone, you give these orders,
 Of all the Ports within our borders.
 Thus from the rule you sadly wander,
 That sauce for goose is sauce for gander.

The movements motive, though well dressed,
 I know, sir, is none of the best ;
 In fact, sir, 'tis your cool design
 That I obey you or resign ;
 I tell you, neither will I do,
 For Marcy, President, or you.
 Like Barney's wife, I'll not comply *h*
 With your wishes, no, not I.
 I'll give my offices away
 Just as I please, that's plain as day.
 Yet if the President or you,
 Should want a little place or two,
 Upon my word, I'd not say—no,
 Further than this I will not go.
 There, sir, 's my mind, since you provoke it,
 Now put it in your pipe and smoke it.

I'll publish this, since you have made
 Your letter public, who's afraid?
 And henceforth, sir, with feelings fervent,
 I'm your obedient (humbug) servant:
 Not Tom Jones nor Monsieur Tonson,
 But the Collector—GREENE C. BRONSON.

P. S. On other points of law or honor
 You are referred to Counsel Conor;
 Than whom indeed, there's not a bolder,
 Nor yet a better bottle holder.

~~~~~

### O'Conor's Flourish.

#### ECHO.

THE saucy Union, some time since,  
 Said some things which made me wince;  
 And cut at Bronson too, but I,  
 Did not think it worth reply.  
 It said, the general government  
 In making its appointments meant,  
 And this their policy had been,  
 To share them equally, between  
 The democrats of '48,  
 And the Free-soilers of our State;  
 In order to obliterate  
 The past divisions of the party,  
 And make it once more sound and hearty.  
 That Bronson too, as well as I,  
 By taking office, did imply  
 A promise that we would support  
 This policy, that now, in short,  
 Having secured our share of spoil,  
 We from our promises recoil;  
 Refusing, wholly, all communion  
 With the Soft friends of the Union.  
 With whom before we were united,  
 But now by us who're wholly slighted;

Though, with their aid, we gladly won our  
Official benefits and honor.

Stripped of its verbosity,

The article does simply say.

We got, and 'tis a high offence

Our offices by false pretence,

Although insulting in its tone,

It would have to oblivion gone

Unnoticed, had no higher name

Come forward to endorse the same.

But Guthrie's late outrageous letter

To Greene C. Bronson, breaks my fetter.

For, though a mere newspaper writer,

Of paragraphs, a low inditer ;

I could not notice, yet you'll see

A Secretary's game for me.

This letter's published to the nation,

For the general information.

And this it is that makes me squirm,

Some think the letter does confirm

The Union's charge; which I referred to ;

This inference must be demurred to.

And in the first place, I will show,

The letter don't the charge avow ;

Then demonstrate the charge to be

False and calumnious, as to me.

Of course, it is the true intent,

The end and aim of government,

O'er office-holders to preside,

And the pap fairly to divide ;

It is for this that parties strive ;

This keeps democracy alive.

For this we write, and speak, and print :

And, surely now, the devil's in't,

When having fought the battle, we,

Have gained a glorious victory,

Must give part of our spoil away

To those, though joining in the fray,

Who're not and never mean to be  
 Of our stripe of democracy.  
 Indeed, I should be but a fool  
 To give assent to such a rule.  
 None, who bear the freesoil name,  
 With me, can ever come that game.  
 To vote with us they may have leave;  
 But offices they can't receive.

What Guthrie says, I don't deny,  
 That Bronson, too, as well as I  
 By taking office, in some sort,  
 Pledged ourselves we would support  
 The principles and policy,  
 Which in the inaugural we see.  
 And that we, both, are also bound,  
 By any on the platform found.  
 Yet I can't find, I must confess,  
 Any freesoil in the address.  
 Nor yet, for I have searched it o'er,  
 On the platform at Baltimore.  
 Therefore, I say, Bronson and I,  
 Are not bound by this policy.  
 But this same letter does not say  
 We ever said, we 'd give away  
 A portion of our share of spoil,  
 To any votary of freesoil,  
 It does not say that he or I  
 Were told that the democracy  
 Had any sections or incisions,  
 Or any factions or divisions.  
 For aught therein that doth appear,  
 We did not know that such things were,  
 As Hard-shells, Soft-shells, Fogies, Hunkers,  
 Barn-burners, Porgies, or Moss-bunkers.  
 His letter does not say that we  
 Knew anything of this policy.  
 In fact, his letter don't allege  
 We gave this policy our pledge.

As he don't say these things, see you,  
 And could not say 'em and speak true,  
 From thence, 'tis decorous and fair  
 That we respectfully infer,  
 He don't mean to be understood  
 As saying so, for ill or good.  
 No one is better skilled than I  
 In making truth look like a lie.  
 And, on the contrary, in sooth,  
 In making lies look like the truth.  
 For 'tis my trade, which I have plied  
 For years, with great success and pride;  
 Witness the Forrest trial where (i)  
 I gave Prince John more than his share;  
 And, with that letter in the tourney,  
 Almost used up Colonel Forney;  
 And here is really all the wonder,  
 The Union simply steals my thunder;  
 And makes that seem, which is not so,  
 Most undoubted, really true.

The appointments in New York, in fine,  
 Including Dickinson's and mine,  
 Gazetted were the self-same day.  
 To Washington, without delay,  
 I bore and gave a declination  
 By Dickinson of his situation.  
 A few hours after, Bronson's name  
 Went to the Senate, who, the same,  
 With most amazing condescension,  
 Confirmed, forthwith, without dissension.  
 Bronson, then, was far away,  
 And in Connecticut, some say—  
 Just in this manner, by no trick,  
 He got the place of Scripture Dick. k  
 He and I are thus, you see,  
 Placed in the same cat-e-go-ry:

And old Secretary grim,  
 Hits me, when he strikes at him.  
 Such is my evidence, don't doubt it,  
 I was there, and know all about it.  
 Like the Auchisean son of Mars,  
 Quorum magna fui pars. *l*

Van Buren, the red-whiskered fox,  
 Then President, strange paradox,  
 The Little Magician, once so called,  
 And then the sage of Lindenwald,  
 When proud he grew, though by the book,  
 It was far better Kinderhook, *m*  
 A quarter century or more,  
 Held all New York State in his power ;  
 And had it firmly in his hold,  
 Guided its politics and controlled.  
 But, when he came before the nation  
 A third time for a nomination,  
 And found his efforts all were vain,  
 His spite he no more could contain,  
 But went and built, as we all know,  
 A new platform at Buffalo.  
 Then, from the flock of democrats,  
 He drew away the Softs and Flats  
 Called them his own, he was so bold,  
 And penned them in the Free-soil fold ;  
 And summoning his stalwart son,  
 Gave them in charge to brave Prince John ;  
 Who, as chief shepherd of the flock,  
 Has proved a chip of the old block :  
 And did more mischief in our State  
 Than I can now stop to relate.  
 The whole affair 's no mystery,  
 As you all know, 'tis history.

Afterwards, the Free-soil men  
 Commenced deserting from their pen ;

But for their leaders all had gone  
 And mingled with us into one,  
 Like kindred drops, so that no eye,  
 Between us could the difference spy.  
 Their leaders, with consummate art,  
 Since they could not be kept apart,  
 Resolved their influence to maintain,  
 That they might know them all again,  
 Marked and numbered them each one,  
 And then they let them with us run :  
 And thus the union came about,  
 Of which I've disapproved throughout.

After this union 't would appear,  
 Though a minority they were,  
 They got control of each convention,  
 In the manner I will mention.  
 If sixty in convention go  
 With forty, though they 're three to two,  
 The forty (and it is because  
 We find it 's one of nature's laws,  
 That Hards, who in convention hail  
 As delegates, are all for sale,)  
 The forty, if they'll only buy  
 Eleven, get a majority.  
 Three or four offices will suffice  
 To do the thing up very nice ;  
 And it is as good a way as any :  
 And thus the few control the many,  
 This contradictory may seem,  
 But 's truer than Judge Edmond's dream. *n*  
 Who drunk on opium and brandy  
 Beheld the gates of heaven quite handy,  
 But the excitement past, he fell,  
 Into the horrid realms of hell,  
 And saw poor souls on gridirons quiver,  
 And dreadful sights that made him shiver ;  
 That what I say is true indeed,  
 And that 'tis thus the Softs succeed,

In ruling us, our history,  
 Since '49 will verify,  
 Also their fortune and career,  
 Who high in office now appear ;  
 And yet I will not tell their names,  
 But let their deeds reveal their shames.

In my great speech at Castle Garden,  
 I plainly showed I was a Hard 'un.  
 Though not a democratic meeting,  
 I there received a hearty greeting ;  
 For they all said I was a brick,  
 I dealt my blows so fast and thick  
 Against Free-soil. Yes, you may flout me  
 If a soft spot you find about me.  
 The next convention I attended,  
 Finding matters were not mended,  
 In token of disgust complete,  
 I shook the dust from off my feet ;  
 And from the place forthwith did flee,  
 And Cutting cut away with me.  
 And since that time the world knows well,  
 I have been down upon Free-soil.  
 And the chief leader of that section,  
 In a speech since the election,  
 Which at Albany he made,  
 'Mong various other matters said ;  
 The truth of me, a wonder too,  
 That he so strange a thing could do.  
 For John Van Buren in his hits,  
 Gave me, what tailors can't do, fits. o  
 He said my kicking up a row,  
 As I have done, was anyhow  
 With my whole course in harmony ;  
 He could expect nought else of me.  
 Thus John, himself, is my endorser ;  
 And do you ask for any more, sir,

To show I never could have meant  
 To give the policy my assent,  
 Of sharing the official spoil,  
 With any tainted with Free-soil?

And then there is poor General Dix,  
 Who, in the way of politics,  
 Has crossed, I fear, the gloomy styx:  
 They've got him in a pretty fix.  
 They marked him with so deep a dye  
 That it would not wash away:  
 Vain and useless was his toil,  
 He was so soiled with his Free-soil.  
 For though he had sought absolution  
 From this heretical pollution,  
 Had all his previous errors spurned  
 And to the mother church returned;  
 Yet when the voting time was near  
 And he went out to electioneer,  
 The Free-soil presses, day by day,  
 Of the poor fellow thus would say:  
 "Cochrane, Dix and John Van Buren,  
 Made speeches, yesterday, at Turin.  
 John Van Buren, Dix and Cochrane,  
 A meeting held, to which a flock ran  
 Eagerly, their words to hear.  
 Our section does the work, that's clear."  
 Thus crucified between two thieves,  
 The world looks on him and believes  
 That he is one, for there he's hung  
 And in the sight of all he's swung.  
 Therefore, he could neither get  
 A seat in Pierce's Cabinet;  
 Nor, though it was deserved, a chance  
 To go as Minister to France.  
 Thus, even when they would repent,  
 The rascals meet with punishment.

The Secretary's letter says,  
 Which puts me rather in amaze,  
 That our respected President  
 Has given this policy his assent.  
 Whate'er appearances he shews,  
 I am sure they 're not his real views.  
 And for the President's own sake,  
 I think there must be some mistake.  
 As Chief Ruler of the nation,  
 He knows the duties of his station:  
 And has displayed assuredly  
 A measure of ability,  
 In dealing out the loaves and fishes,  
 And filling up the little dishes.  
 From more important things at home  
 He don't permit his thoughts to roam:  
 But shows a deep solicitude  
 For the whole party's general good.  
 And though the splendid New York span,  
 Of Hards and Softs, have fractious been  
 And tried to kick out of the traces;  
 Yet he holds them to their paces;  
 Determined that he will see whether  
 They will not kindly go together,  
 They 've reared and plunged, but he maintains  
 For all a firm hold of the reins.  
 And though he may lack some in glory  
 He 's not weak in the upper story:  
 For if he had been, do you see,  
 He'd not have nominated me.  
 Besides, whatever may be said  
 About the softness of his head,  
 I really must say, for my part,  
 I do not think him soft at heart.  
 This much to vindicate my honor,

CHARLES O'CO-NOR NOT O'CON-NER. *p*

## The Secretary's Socdologer.

TO THE COLLECTOR.

SIR,

Yours of the seventeenth is received,  
 Though unimportant, 'tis believed,  
 Its contents indicate that we  
 Can't get along harmoniously.  
 Your words and conduct I condemn,  
 Because I can't approve of them;  
 In fact, you've been so impudent,  
 I had to tell the President,  
 You knew it was against the rule,  
 And yet you would talk out in school,  
 And when you're told how to behave,  
 You flare about and rant and rave.  
 Reproof, advice, alike are vain,  
 You boldly answer back again.  
 But hearken, sir, we have a way  
 To punish you, mind what I say.  
 Thus, though Congress lately passed *q*  
 To our brave officers disgust,  
 A law, forbidding in our ships  
 The cat-o'-ninetails, blows and whips,  
 Yet even they find wit to invent  
 For saucy sailors punishment.  
 This foolscap, sir, is sent to you,  
 With that very end in view.  
 Don't make faces, sir, nor tear it,  
 Like it, or lump it, you must wear it.

Certainly, sir, it does appear,  
 To me to be a little queer,  
 A man, experienced as you,  
 A judge, aye, and a lawyer too,  
 And of acquirements great, should fall  
 Into such error, as at all

To think in you the power should be  
 To make appointments, when you see  
 The authority is all in me.  
 The constitution makes that plain ;  
 You'd better read it o'er again.  
 If afterwards you still avow,  
 The same opinion you do now,  
 Your legal light will make quite paly,  
 The half cent candle of Judge Daly, r  
 Who from the bench once sagely said,  
 That prostitution was a trade ;  
 An evil, true, but, in his view,  
 A necessary evil too.  
 This dictum rather made a stench  
 'Mongst his associates on the bench,  
 But his associates off thought it  
 Good Daly law ; 'twas Daly wit.

The tone and temper of your letter,  
 Would certainly have been a fetter  
 Embarrassing to both, but now  
 You such assumptions bold avow,  
 And show such insubordination,  
 As we can't tolerate in your station.  
 This letter, which I send by mail,  
 Wasp-like, its sting has in its tail ;  
 For my reply to all your scoff is,  
 You can't continue, sir, in office ;  
 Your name, sir, is struck from the list,  
 In fact, my dear sir, you're dismiss'd.  
 I have the honor, sir to be  
 Very respectfully,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

P. S. Tell Charles O'Connor that the crown s  
 Of martyrdom is all your own :  
 We wont serve him as we've served you,  
 And make him thus immortal too.

## Letter from Secretary Guthrie to Collector Bronson.

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WASHINGTON, OCT. 3, 1853.

DEAR SIR—SINCE the conversation we had upon the subject of the unfortunate division in the democratic party in New York, I feel more and more convinced that the present disorganization cannot fail to endanger the success of the principles of the party there, and to prove injurious elsewhere. But the separation is effected. A conviction has forced itself on my mind, that, by democrats pledged to each other upon a common platform of principles, the division could and ought to have been prevented. You are aware that the principles of the Baltimore Convention and the policy intimated in the inaugural address, the President and his constitutional advisers stand pledged to, before the world. They have been, and are, united as one man upon these principles and that policy, and had reason to believe that all gentlemen who consented to accept office under the administration stood pledged to the same principles and policy.

As the President understands the principles avowed as the platform of the party at Baltimore, all democrats who joined in upholding and carrying out the same were entitled to be recognized as worthy of the confidence of the united party, and consequently eligible to official station.

That all could not obtain office was manifest, and that the distribution could not be exactly equal amongst the different sections of the party, was equally certain. Yet the distribution was intended to be so made as to give just cause of complaint to no one section, and it is believed that this intention has been carried out not only by the President himself, but by most of his appointees, in respect to the offices under the latter.

It has so happened that your appointments have been very generally made from that portion of the party to which you adhere. This you thought best calculated to secure union and harmony. That desirable object has failed to be obtained, and the other portion of the party feel that they have not been fully recognized by you, and as things now stand, may not do

justice to your motives. I call your attention to this subject, and to the fact that the President and his Cabinet, with entire unanimity, recognize that portion of the party as democrats, distinctly avowing and firmly maintaining the principles of the Baltimore platform, and entitled to be recognized by appointment to official stations in your department. Allow me to express the expectation that you will so recognize them in the only way that will carry conviction with it.

I have not hitherto deemed it necessary to make any particular inquiry as to the section of the democratic party to which persons nominated for positions in the Custom House at New York belonged prior to the reunion of the party in 1849—which reunion was supposed to have been thoroughly cemented in the great and triumphant contest in 1852. But as the present excited state of feeling among political friends who acted together in 1852, and who now stand unequivocally upon the same platform of principles in New York, is suggestive of a discrimination of which the administration will not approve. I shall send a copy of this letter to the Naval Officer and Surveyor of the port, in order that there may be no misapprehension as to the policy which the President will require to be pursued. I am, very respectfully,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

G. C. BRONSON, Esq., Collector, New York.

Copies of the above letter were sent to the Naval Officer and Surveyor, with the following note :—

WASHINGTON, Oct. 3, 1853.

DEAR SIR—I enclose herewith a copy of a letter this day addressed to the Hon. G. C. Bronson. It will explain itself, and show you what the President expects in relation to the distribution of patronage in the respective offices of the New York Custom House, to which you will conform your action in any future nominations you may have occasion to make. I am very respectfully,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

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### Collector Bronson's Reply.

NEW YORK, Oct. 17, 1853.

SIR—The pressure of official business and confinement to a sick room have prevented an earlier answer to your letter of the 3d instant.

You first state, in substance, that I have been under a pledge which has not been redeemed, to distribute the offices in my gift among different sections of the democratic party, and then prescribe the course you expect me to pursue in future. You do not complain that my appointees are not proper persons for the places they occupy, or that they are sound democrats, sincerely attached to the principles of the party, and firm supporters of the national administration. But you think I have not properly regarded all sections of the party.

When Mr. Dickinson declined the Collectorship of this port in April last, I was asked by several friends whether I would allow my name to be mentioned to the President for the place, and answered in the negative. I thought no more of the matter until two days afterwards, when I saw in the public prints a telegraphic despatch announcing my appointment. I had two years before resigned my place as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, with the intention of never again accepting a public office; and grateful as I was for this new mark of confidence, I should have declined the appointment; but for the high opinion which I entertained of the President and his principles, and the assurance of friends that he earnestly desired my acceptance of the trust.

When I accepted the place, I had never seen nor had any communication with the President, and of course there were no pledges between us, save such as may be implied between honorable men holding the like relation to each other. He had a right to expect that I would diligently and faithfully discharge the duties of the office, and maintain, in all proper way, the principles which restored the democrat party to power; and, so long as I performed that implied obligation, I had a right to expect that his confidence in me would not be withdrawn. I have never complained that the President has not discharged his part of the obligation, and am not conscious of having omitted to discharge my own.

You tell me that the President and his constitutional advisers stand pledged before the world to the principles and policy laid down in the Baltimore platform and the inaugural address, "and had reason to believe that all gentlemen who consented to accept office under the administration stood pledged to the same principles and policy." I agree to that; and, though it is but an implied pledge I admit its full force. But it proves nothing to the present purpose; for there is not one word either in the Baltimore platform or the inaugural address about distributing offices among different sections of the party. If the President

or his appointees are pledged to any such distribution, you must look to some other document to find evidence of the obligation—some document which I have never seen.

It may be inferred from the *acts* of the President that he regards as eligible to office all democrats who cordially united on the Baltimore platform in 1852, and are sincerely attached to the principles of the party, although at some former period they may have been out of the way. That is a proper rule. It is the one on which I have acted in making appointments to office—not because I was under any pledge to do so, but because I thought the rule just in itself. But your letter proceeds upon the ground that I should go beyond the inquiry whether applicants for office are good democrats now and ascertain to what section they formerly belonged; and then make such a distribution of offices between the different sections that no one of them will have just cause for complaint. It is not only impossible to administer such a rule as that with success, but the consequence of adopting it must be that we shall never have one democratic party, united upon a broad basis of principle, but a mere combination of different sections, held together by no better bond than a love of office, and ready to fall to pieces the moment one section thinks itself aggrieved in the distribution.

Notwithstanding what has been said, I think it would be found, on a proper scrutiny, that the section which has so loudly and bitterly complained of injustice has received its full share of the offices which I have bestowed. It is undoubtedly true that more appointments have been made from one section of the party than from the other; and a single reason will be sufficient to show why it was proper to pursue that course. Most of the Custom House appointments for this port have always been made from the counties of New York and Kings, in which are the three large cities which form a part of the port. In 1848 the democrat and free soil vote in those counties bore the relation of more than four for the former to one for the latter. From the free soil vote should be deducted the whig abolition vote, which went in the same direction. After making the proper allowance on that account, I think it safe to conclude that not more than one out of seven of the democrats in those counties voted the free soil ticket in 1848. In this view of the matter, I think it will be found that the free soil section is far from having just cause for complaint. I have acted in this liberal manner—not because I was under any pledge, but because I wished to do what I reasonably could to promote the harmony and continued ascendancy of the party.

It is possible that I am mistaken in supposing that the free soil section has got its full share of the places; for, in distributing the little offices in my gift, which have for the most part gone among the rank and file of the party, I have neither had the time nor the inclination to do much by way of investigating the antecedents of men who were supposed to be all right now.

Upon the recent rupture of the party at Syracuse, that the division could and ought to have been prevented. It is enough for me to say, that I not only had no agency in bringing about that division, but I tried to prevent it; my counsel was given in favor of the united action of the convention, and I sincerely hoped harmony would prevail. If any government officers are chargeable with what took place at Syracuse, the burden must rest on those who were there, of whom there were three from this city, and not upon the Collector who was at home attending to the duties of his office.

I do not state these things by way of apology, for I have none to make, nor by way of courting favors, for I have none to ask.

You speak of the re-union of the party of 1849 which re-union was supposed to have been thoroughly cemented in the great and triumphant contest in 1852, although I ardently desired a re-union if it could be effected upon principle, I never approved the manner in which the attempt was made to bring about that desirable end. I thought then and think still, that those who had deserted the democratic standard in 1848 and thrown the state and national Government into the hands of the whigs, should, if convinced of their error, return again to our camp without exacting conditions, and should then be treated with the utmost kindness. The party would then have been strong, and we should have heard no more about sections. But a very different course was pursued; and the free soil leaders came back, so far as they came at all, under a league or treaty between them and a few leading democrats, with no stronger bond of union than an agreement to divide the offices. The arrangement was based upon no principle. The free soil leaders were left at liberty to adopt the course which they pursued; and, instead of again hoisting the national banner, they marched into the democratic camp with their own sectional colors flying, and thus became an independent element in the party. Indeed, your letter proceeds upon the ground that the party has all along been divided into sections; and, consequently, that accounts must be balanced between them in the distribution of offices. All experience proves that such a coalition as was form-

ed in 1849 can never be thoroughly cemented. Sooner or later it will fall to pieces. The cohesive power of patronage cannot long save that which has within itself the elements of dissolution. It is not therefore any matter of astonishment that the "re-union" was dissolved at the late Syracuse Convention.

After the league of 1849 had been broken, and the two sections had again become separate parties in form as well as substance, it became necessary for me, as a citizen of New York, to make my choice between the two tickets which had been nominated. My reasons for preferring one and rejecting the other are before the public; and no one has the right to impute to me any other motives than those which I have avowed. I rejected one ticket because the nomination had been effected by means which no honest man could approve, and because the nominees had been brought forward by men who had been hostile to what I deemed the best interests of the State in relation to the canals. I approved the other ticket because the nominees were right on the question of State policy and because those who supported it were "contending for the principles which restored the democratic party to power, and placed Franklin Pierce at the head of the government." I presume there can be no objection at Washington to my maintaining now as I have always done before, the principles on which the national administration stands; and with questions of mere State policy you must allow me to say the administration has no rightful concern.

What consequences will follow the recent break in the party is more than I can tell; but I feel reasonably confident that if the national democrats had a fair field, and the free soil democrats were not fighting under false colors, their ticket could not get votes enough to help the whigs through with their nominations. But we have not got a fair field. The Washington *Union*, while professing to speak the sentiments of the administration, has thrown its weight on the side of the free soil ticket. It has undertaken to decide upon the regularity of our conventions, and to sit in judgment upon questions of mere State policy. It takes the side of those who have once proved faithless to the party, and put the Union in jeopardy, and denounces those who have all along supported the principles which restored the party to power. It is now a co-laborer with the free soil prints in this State, some of which it so lately read out of the democratic party. Though that print is not in itself of great importance, yet when it professes, without rebuke, to do these things as the organ of the administration, much mischief may be done. It matters little what disclaimers there may be

in private circles, so long as there is no public declaration that the paper speaks without authority. However unfortunately the election may terminate, the responsibilities will rest upon others, and not upon me.

Let me now notice the time, manner and motive of your letter.

As to time ; it was after the rupture and nomination of two tickets at Syracuse, and the two ratification meetings in this city ; after the Collector had been denounced by the free soil leaders and presses, and the President had been called upon to remove him ; after hungry office seekers and bitter politicians had visited Washington to misrepresent and traduce that officer, and to whose clamors as you well know, he never made any reply ; after the *Union* had taken ground against the ticket of the national democrats, and in favor of the ticket of their opponent ; then it was that you first discovered cause for complaint of any kind against the Collector. You had approved all his nominations, with a single exception, and in that case the office was abolished. Down to the receipt of your letter of the 3d inst. you had never intimated to the Collector, in any form, that you disapproved of his appointments, or of the manner in which they had been distributed.

As to the manner: you did not pursue the usual course, and issue a circular laying down a uniform rule for the government of all Custom House officers having patronage to bestow ; but confined your instructions to the port of New York alone. If the doctrine of the letter is a sound one, it is obviously proper that it should be applied in other places as well as here ; and it should regulate the conduct of all classes of government officers having patronage to bestow. Marshals, postmasters, district attorneys, and others, should act upon it in the selection of their deputies, clerks, and other agents.

I will here mention another fact of no little significance. The next day after the letter was written it was followed by another requiring me to submit for your approval the names of all clerks proposed to be employed in the bonded warehouses and public stores. In this matter you not only departed from the practice of all former Secretaries of the Treasury—who had left those appointments to the sole discretion of the Collector—but, so far as I have learned, you again departed from the usual course of issuing a circular to all the collectors at our great ports, singled out the Collector at New York, and prescribed a new rule for him alone. These facts need no comment—they speak for themselves.

As to the motive of this movement, let others judge.

This is, I believe, the first instance in which a member of the Cabinet has interfered with the discretion of a collector, marshal, postmaster, or any other government officer having patronage to bestow, and laid down a rule for his government in the selection of his deputies, clerks, or other agents; and it certainly is the first instance in which a public officer has been instructed to go into an inquiry about sections, and see that a just distribution of offices was made between them. You have a right by law to give instructions on many subjects connected with the collection of the revenue and such instructions it will be my duty to follow. But when you go beyond that and undertake to direct in matters which the law has confided to my discretion, no such obligations exist.

As to some offices of the customs the Collector has the right of nomination and the Secretary the right of approval or rejection, and as to other officers the power of appointment is vested in the Collector alone. I shall not interfere with the exercise of your powers, and I wish you will render the like justice to me. If you or any other high officer of government, desired the appointment of a particular individual, I need not say it would give me great pleasure to comply with his wishes. But I respectfully deny that you have any right to issue instructions for the government of my conduct in making selections for office.

So far as relates to the mere disposition of patronage without regard to my responsibility for the acts of the persons appointed, I would gladly transfer the trust to another. I have no taste for such matters and my comfort—aspirations I have none—would be greatly promoted if some one else would perform the same for me, but the law and my commission have laid the burden upon me and I cannot surrender it to another without a dereliction of duty.

As you have given your letter to the press, saying, “the subject is a public one,” I shall give the same direct answer.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GREENE C. BRONSON.

Hon. JAMES GUTHRIE, Secretary of the Treasury.

from Mr. Chas. O'Connor, United States District Attorney.

A REPLY TO THE "UNION."

The Washington *Union*, in its assumed character of government organ, gave to the public, on the 27th ultimo, an elaborate article censuring the course of Judge Bronson and myself in withholding our support from the second State ticket recently nominated at Syracuse.

It alleges that, in respect to appointments in this State, the general administration had adopted the policy of dividing the offices in its gift between the free-soilers of '48 and the democrats of that period, "as a mode of obliterating all past schisms and divisions of the party," and that Judge Bronson and myself, knowing this fact, had accepted the offices "tendered" to us, under an implied promise that we would give our "influence and co-operation" in promoting the success of that policy. It asserts, also, that a political connection existed between us and the leaders of the late free-soil faction, "from which we are enjoying high official honors and benefits," sarcastically observing, in this connection, "how scrupulously conscientious" we "now are" in refusing to continue the association.

Stripped of the verbosity in which, for unworthy purposes, the writer has clothed his out-givings, the charge fairly and distinctly stated is, that fraudulently concealing our sentiments, and impliedly promising to aid the policy indicated, we led the President to entrust us with office, and that, having by this dishonest artifice secured a portion of the "spoils" we are now betraying his confidence.

Studiously insulting in its tone, replete with falsehoods unsupported by even a shadow of plausibility, and deeply inculpatory as this article is, it would have gone down to merited oblivion, along with the many anonymous libels of the day, wholly unnoticed and unanswered by me, had no higher or better authority been vouched for its statements. The paper, it is true, claims to be the organ of the President; but it has never advanced that claim, except in a circuitous and argumentative form; it has never ventured directly to assert that it spoke by his authority, as I knew that it was not his organ, I felt free to treat it as the hireling of a nameless libeller.

Subsequent events, however, have imparted to this charge a complexion which may justify me in giving it this public refu-

tation. A letter from the Hon. the Secretary of the Treasury, to Greene C. Bronson, Esq., Collector of this Port, bearing date the 3d inst., transmitted to him and other officers, and promulgated in the *Union* for general information, is now before the public, commanding, as it justly deserves, almost universal attention. That letter contains expressions which are generally understood as in some measure verifying the charge in question, and which, if read with no more than ordinary attention, would be likely so to impress even the most intelligent reader. Considering the high authority from which the letter emanates, it cannot be expected that I should be so regardless of my good name as to lie still under the general belief of my fellow-citizens, that it confirmed the charge put forth by the *Union*, especially as the honorable signer could not possibly have intended so to be understood.

I will, therefore, show, in the first place, that the Hon. Secretary has borne no testimony in support of the charge; and secondly, that the charge itself is false and calumnious.

The Hon. Secretary says to Judge Bronson:—

“You are aware that to the principles of the Baltimore convention and the policy intimated in the inaugural address, the President and his constitutional advisers stand pledged before the world. They have been and are united as one man upon these principles and that policy, and had reason to believe that ALL gentlemen who consented to accept office under the administration, stood pledged to the same principles and policy.”

The letter then proceeds to state, in the present tense, that the administration recognizes as existing in this state, distinct sections of the democratic party, and desires Judge Bronson to do justice to one of those sections by also recognizing it and allowing it a share in his distribution of the Custom House appointments. It states that Judge Bronson has not hitherto acted on this principle, and has made the appointments generally from his own section. It further speaks in the following words:—

“As the President understands the principles avowed as the platform of the party at Baltimore, all democrats who joined in upholding and carrying out the same were entitled to be recognized as worthy of the confidence of the united party, and consequently eligible to official station. That all could not obtain office was manifest, and that the distribution could not be exactly equal amongst the different sections of the party was equally certain. Yet the distribution was intended to be so made as to give just cause of complaint to no one section, and it is believed that this intention has been carried out, not

only by the President himself but by most of his appointees, in respect to the offices under the latter."

The quotation first above made from the Hon. Secretary's letter, when read in connection with what follows concerning appointments, opinions as to the import of the Baltimore platform, and the intentions of the administration, might very well, on a casual reading, appear to verify the charge in question; but a careful perusal and scrutiny will satisfy any one that it only asserts what no one would think of denying—i. e., that the appointees of the President were, by the very act of acceptance, pledged to support the principles and policy indicated in the Baltimore platform and in the inaugural address. The letter does not assert that either to Judge Bronson or any other appointee of the administration, it was ever, in any way or shape, intimated before his acceptance that he was expected to recognize distinct sections of the party, or any section of the party, either in appointments under him or otherwise. It does not assert that any one imparted to Judge Bronson, or to any other appointee of the government, the fact that there existed in the State of New York, or elsewhere, distinct, "sections" "portions," factions, or divisions of the democratic party, which it was the policy of the administration to recognize in its immediate appointments, or to require to be recognized by its appointees; neither, to use the language of the *Union's* anonymous article, does this letter assert, as that article does, that Judge Bronson, or any other appointee of the government, accepted office under any other pledge, promising or understanding, express or implied, that he would give his influence and co-operation in "promoting the success of any such policy, or indeed, upon any understanding whatever in respect to the conferring of offices."

Nothing of the kind could have been asserted with truth, as it respects Judge Bronson or myself; and, as it neither is asserted nor could have been truly asserted, it is proper and decorous to say that the Hon. Secretary never intended to convey any such idea to the public.

Even truth itself may be stated in such a manner, and under an arrangement as to deceive, thereby "assuming the nature and engaging in the guilt of falsehood." Consequently, the adept in misrepresentation, rather than risk a direct untruth in his details, generally aims to work out a false inference. The article in the *Union* is framed upon this principle. Its author moves onward to his deceptive purpose with the wary tread of an habitual and practiced falsifier. As usual in such composition, (and several specimens are now before the public,) the due coherence

of language is wanting, the regular sequence of ideas departed from, and the subjects under review, instead of being distinctly named, are described by an obscure circumlocution, or by terms of doubtful or ambiguous import. In this way many of the most important and misleading of its sentences, taken singly, are rendered so close a counterfeit presentment of the fact, that while a simple denial would be an unsatisfactory method of refuting them, a thorough dissection would be intolerably tedious. Nevertheless, the libeller must not escape confrontation; and, therefore, as the best method of avoiding the obscurity and misapprehension which might result from his indirect forms of language, the accusation is above restated in a distinct and intelligible form. I proceed to refute it.

The New York appointments, including Daniel S. Dickinson's and my own, for the offices of Collector and Attorney, were gazetted on the same day, and soon afterwards I bore to Washington, and delivered to the President, the written declinature of Mr. Dickinson. Judge Bronson had not then as yet been named in connection with the Collectorship; but within a few hours thereafter, and upon the same day, he was nominated by the President, and unanimously confirmed by the Senate. I am morally certain that from the first suggestion of his high and honorable name until his confirmation as Collector, neither the President nor any member of the Cabinet had an opportunity of conferring with any friend of Judge Bronson, unless, indeed, it had been thought fit to confer with me. He was at the time travelling in Connecticut, and his exact whereabouts being unknown, it was impossible to have conferred with himself, even by telegraph. From these circumstances, it will be seen that I am as competent to testify in respect to his acceptance of his appointment, as in respect to my own acceptance of that which was conferred upon myself. No one concerned in his appointment could have inferred from any facts then appearing, that his political sentiments differed from mine; and, consequently, I shall henceforth speak only to exonerate myself from this scandalous imputation, claiming on the strength of what has already been stated, that Judge Bronson, when his appointment was made, must have been considered and treated as standing in the same category with myself.

From me no pledge of any kind in favor of the distribution policy was ever obtained or could possibly have been implied. To prove this, it will be convenient briefly to review the rise and progress of the "sections."

For more than a quarter of a century prior to 1847, Martin

Van Buren had guided and controlled the democratic party in this State. In that year opposition to him as a candidate for a second Presidential term assumed a form and a force which led to his opposing, in 1848, all the democratic candidates in the State and the Union. Accustomed as they were, to follow his lead, and long connected with him by the ties of political association, a considerable number of democratic politicians were deceived and drawn into his party. His friends constructed the Buffalo platform, raised the standard of the free-soil agitation, formed an alliance with the whig abolitionists, and obtained for their mixed State ticket a vote slightly exceeding that of the regular democratic candidates.

Very soon after the general election of '48, the democrats who had supported the free-soil ticket began to return to their old associations. The rank and file needed no leaders in this easy and natural movement. Neither compacts nor coalitions were necessary; and if the leaders would have permitted the honest masses who had inconsiderately gone into the revolt, would soon have been found side by side with, and undistinguishable from their fellow democrats. No sections would then have been known in the democratic party; it would have become, as it was originally, united and harmonious—one and indivisible. The free-soil leaders could not consent thus to disband their section, and permit a perfect fusion and reconciliation of the democrats who had erred with those who had held fast to the faith. Such a course would have left them to win what honors they could as mere working democrats in a fair field of individual competition, unaided by party feuds or sectional divisions. They determined upon a different policy—it was to keep up and continue their faction, mark and number its members, so that they might always be distinguishable, unite it by compact with the unchanged democracy, call it a section of the democratic party, procure its recognition by authority as an integral portion of the party, and claim on its behalf and in its name a rateable proportion of the offices.

Whatever partial and temporary success may seem to have attended this design, every attempt toward its execution has been met by a steady and determined resistance.

It was evident injustice and folly to admit into the bosom of the party an unrepentant corps of political rebels, with its officers at its head, its drums beating and its colors flying. Instead of acknowledging its errors, dissolving its organization and mingling with the party, it was clear that the members of this section would keep up a line of separation between themselves

and other democrats, and claim, not that they had received a pardon, but that they had achieved a victory. The leaders of such a section must necessarily be disturbers. Their claims to office and promotion would rest not upon their personal merits, but upon their influence over a faction having its origin in revolt, and distinguished only by the history of its political offences. True to its original instincts and its antecedents, the section itself would ever stand ready to renew its assaults upon just authority. The project was justly denounced as an effort to organise a body of political Dalgettys within the party, which the timid could be made to propitiate, and with which knaves could deal.

The effort to establish this kind of coalition was, nevertheless, persevered in, had a partial success, and thence to the present time, the free-soil faction and some politicians whose interests are promoted thereby, have constantly struggled to maintain distinct sections in the democratic party, thus seeking, under the false pretence of a desire for "union and harmony," to give undying perpetuity to faction and discord.

In the autumn of 1849, men witnessed the singular spectacle of two conventions, composed of delegates nominally democratic, convened at Rome, openly endeavoring to form such a coalition, but these bodies separated without coming to any agreement. The free-soilers aimed at too much, and in that instance failed to accomplish the union they desired.

Soon afterwards they passed, at a meeting of those who happened to be present one day in an interior country town, certain resolutions, affirming free-soil doctrines, and through their presses announced that upon the basis of these resolutions a union between themselves and the late Cass party—as they styled the democrats—had been formed and was in actual existence. A falsehood well persisted in, sometimes wins at last a degree of credit; and from this small beginning arose the union of the sections.

In the same autumn the democratic nominating convention for State officers most unwisely authorized a committee to withdraw one half of the names upon its ticket, and to form, with the free-soilers, a mixed one. This was done. The aim of the free-soil leaders now appeared to be approaching its accomplishment; they henceforth attended the primary elections, sent delegates to the democratic State conventions, and introduced into the political vocabulary that pernicious phrase, "our section of the democratic party."

In the State conventions of '50, '51 and '52, a large number of delegates, calling themselves "the section," and claiming to be

recognized as such, attended and were allowed seats. As a consequence, mixed tickets were nominated. At first the democrats on such tickets were generally defeated and the free-soilers elected; but after a short working of this system, the poison which it necessarily carried into the democratic party had its full operation—nearly all the important nominations fell under the control of the free-soil “section.” In all these conventions the national democrats elected a majority of the delegates; but it is a fixed and irrevocable law of such associations that a recognized minority faction can always control, and that their control leads to the utter demoralization of the whole body, substituting a capacity for intrigue in place of all the virtues which should command popularity and lead to eminence. The members of a minority faction are bound to fidelity toward each other by the ties of a common danger, and are per force kept in unity by the external pressure of a superior opposing force. The honors of official station in the convention itself as the presidency, &c., and the offices to be filled afford them ample means of temptation, and are in their hands efficient weapons of offence and defence. They have but to assign to themselves the lion’s share of these, and enough will still be left as a corruption fund wherewith to purchase the small number of votes usually required to turn the scale. If the factions stand as forty to to sixty, it is only necessary to purchase eleven votes; and where four good offices, as is usually the case, can be offered to the weak, the wicked, or “the soft,” among the sixty it will rarely be difficult for the lesser faction to prevail. This may seem paradoxical; but, however contradictory it seems to theory, a very little reflection will convince any sound thinker that it is practically true. The political history of New York since 1849 illustrates and verifies it to the letter.

I have said that this system of bringing together and keeping up recognized opposing sections, within the same political party, corrupts and demoralizes the whole body. Witness its effect upon the free-soilers. Universally condemned as insincere in their professions of sentimental loyalty to the principles adverse to those on which their section was founded, they are subjected to the contempt of all honest men, and to the derision of each other.

What has been its effect upon the democratic party, upon my section, as the nomenclature sought to be legitimized by authority would require me to do it? Nominations to office at these conventions in which the free-soil section had seats, could be obtained only by an intrigue, except in rare and exceptionable

cases; and commonly the existence and consummation of that intrigue were demonstrably proved by the very fact and method of the nomination. A democratic candidate was observed to have the entire and undivided vote of the free-soil or minority faction; this elected him, being added to a small corps of his own personal friends, and those of two or three other democrats who, like himself, obtained nominations at the same time and by the same vote. A combination with the free-soil or minority faction against his own section was at once apparent, and was denounced accordingly. Driven by that denunciation into the ranks of his former foes, now allied to him by the advantages resulting to both from their successful intrigue, the nominee was soon found employing the power and influence of office in forwarding the views of the faction which elevated him—in securing office to its members, or wreaking vengeance upon the members of his original section, who were honest enough to become disgusted with his intrigue, and “hard” enough to oppose its consummation. These men—to cap the climax of their demoralization—always claimed to be continuing members of their original section. They might be known by their continual use of the following conversational phrases—*i. e.*, “the united democracy,” “union and harmony,” “the union of the party,” “our section of the party,” “your section of their party,” and the like.

All this is well exemplified by the career and fortunes of several distinguished citizens now high in office under the State and general governments, whose name will at once occur to every well-informed New Yorker. It is not necessary, and might be thought invidious, to name them. By their deeds they are known.

What experience has proved in respect to this recognition of sections was apparent to me in 1849. From the instant the coalition was first proposed—from the first broaching of the idea that there might be two recognized sections in the party, down to the present hour—in all places where the subject came up, and to all persons before whom I have ever spoken upon either subject—with the most undeviating consistency, and in the strongest terms of reprobation I could command, I have denounced both the coalition itself and the pernicious policy of recognizing sections or sectional divisions in the same party.

This was known to every democrat who has ever had occasion to know anything concerning my opinions; it was known to all who were concerned in conferring office upon me.

In the state convention of 1850, where for the first time

free-soil members sat with democrats, they held themselves aloof as a section claiming to act as such; they denounced the leading democrats of that day, such as the Hon. William L. Marcy "for their political conduct;" they voted against the democratic platform, and yet they were not expelled, but on the contrary were awarded a share of the offices; but I openly and most distinctly opposed the unhallowed combination. In the same season I was a member of the so-called democratic convention for the district of my residence, which nominated for Congress a notorious free-soiler and abolitionist. I pronounced, both of these conventions heterodoxical, irregular, and possessed of no binding authority; because they had in effect admitted the section which the Hon. Secretary now requires to be formally and distinctly recognized as a section, and as such fed from the public treasury. I declared my opinions, and announced in the most public manner my determination to wage unceasing war against the policy of maintaining the sections. At the celebrated Castle Garden meeting, held just after these conventions, and before the election, I delivered an address which was circulated throughout the Union. Among other remarks of like import, I there expressed myself as follows:—

"In future elections, let us single out for preference those candidates, no matter of what name or political sect, who are faithful to the Constitution, and devoted, before all other earthly duties, to the preservation of the Union. Both of the existing great political parties have allowed themselves to become more or less contaminated with the sin of supporting or tolerating these agents of sectional strife and disunion, the abolition or free-soil agitators. Between the free-soil managers and the expediency men of sound opinions, true, staunch, and reliable men can with difficulty be found amongst the nominees for office. It may, consequently, be difficult to select; but the best must be done that the circumstances will admit. I shall single out for my ticket, men who are in favor of peace measures, fraternity with the South, and the permanency of the Union. If I cannot find such, I will take those who pretend to be so, and thus give my voice for the principle."

In reference to that class of pretended democrats who are known as free-soiler, I said:—

"The tactics and purity of that class were well exemplified in the proceedings of the late Democratic State Convention, held at Syracuse; nor did their nominal opponents appear on the occasion in a light much more creditable. I had the honor to present a set of resolutions, affirming the principles of the na-

tional democratic party, and among them that of the non-intervention of Congress in the anti-slavery agitation. Those resolutions were adopted by a great majority. But lo! when the nominations came up, three noted free-soilers, devoted advocates of the principles and practices denounced by the convention, were recommended to the people as suitable candidates for important offices. It was said that the union of the party required and sanctioned this sacrifice of consistency. A union of two political bodies entertaining opinions diametrically opposed upon the only question now agitating the public mind, or effecting legislative action, was deemed lawful, just and honorable, because it might combine a sufficient vote to defeat the whigs, and secure a portion of the public offices to each of the temporarily united sections. To no such union have I ever been, or will I ever be a party. It is unworthy of both sections, amounts to a desertion of its principles by each, and can serve no honest purpose. I prefer a union of all the friends of union throughout this menaced republic, to a combination of two hostile political factions for temporary success and a participation of spoils. Nevertheless, these candidates were forced upon me, and in the congressional district of my residence, a thorough paced political abolitionist has been put in nomination by professing democrats. For none of these shall my vote be cast. Shall I vote for the abolitionist against the national whig, now a representative in Congress, who supported all the peace measures in which we rejoice, and who has thus given earnest of his devotion to his country? Never. Fellow citizens, let us resolve to withhold our suffrages from any and from every candidate for office who is tainted in any degree with the sin of fostering anti-slavery agitation for political purposes, no matter what his party or his professed political associations, no matter with what studious observance of the forms of party nomination he may have been robed for the canvass."

Sent by the same district to the next State Convention (1851) I attended and soon learned that the same policy was to be pursued. The "section" openly held its separate caucus, and though in the minority, carried the organization by the usual intrigue. Shaking the dust from my feet, I left the convention before any platform was adopted or candidate nominated.

The Hon. Francis B. Cutting, now a democratic representative in Congress, adopted the same course.

If anything connected with the political course of men in this State was a fixed fact, known and conceded on all hands, it was that I would not, either in conventions or at the polls,

vote for any free-soiler of 1848 who continued to act with his associates in maintaining a distinct section of so-called democrats.

The chief leader of the free-soil party, in his speech at the Albany ratification meeting, held a few days ago, truly asserted that my course in opposing his ticket harmonized perfectly with my whole previous political action toward his section, and that nothing else could have been expected from me.

So much for my connection with free-soilers or free-soilism, or with sections of the democratic party.

I next refer to the alleged violation of implied pledges.

Neither when I consented to accept office from the President, nor, at any other time had any human being the slightest reason to suspect from any act, word or acquiescence of mine, that I stood pledged to the principles and policy in relation to the distribution of offices between "sections" or "portions" of the democratic party, mentioned in the letter of the Secretary of the Treasury, or that I would give "influence or co-operation" in aid of the policy mentioned by the *Union*. No one who ever spoke to me, or with me, on the subject, could possibly have doubted that I stood pledged against those principles and that policy.

It is intimated that these principles and this policy are embraced in the Baltimore platform, and were indicated in the inaugural address. I cannot find that the slightest countenance is offered to them in either document. "Principle" it cannot be called; but if the "policy" of keeping the democratic party in this or any other State, forever divided into contending and jealous sections, by recognizing such sections and patronizing their leaders, could be found in the platform or in the address, I should at once withdraw from the former my adhesion and from the latter my admiration.

If, indeed, as a counterpoise to, and qualifying set-off against the true and trusty national democrat, at the head of their ticket, the Baltimore Convention had nominated for the Vice-Presidency Cassius M. Clay, Joshua R. Giddings, or even some noted free-soil democrat who was willing to recant his errors, that body might be charged with having approved the distribution policy. That is said to be the only way of recognizing a section "that will carry conviction with it." The course of the Convention was not marked by any such dereliction of principle.

It is said by the *Union* that the President's announcement of his Cabinet was a distinct avowal of his policy. His enemies

have often said so. I never gave credit to their assaults, assertions or opinions. When the New York appointments were published, it was said that the names of Mr. Dickinson and myself were merely used to whiten the sepulchre in which lay entombed the mutilated hopes of the national democratic party. I did not subscribe to this imputation on the motives of the President.

Neither the Baltimore platform nor the inaugural address contained the slightest hint in favor of a distribution of offices between the sections of the democratic party, or any recognition of such sections; without concurring in the reproach cast upon the Cabinet by its political enemies, and now for the first time given on authority in the *Union*, I could not have supposed that its very *material* and construction indicated such a policy: my own action had been uniformly hostile to the policy; my speech had always been, and still was, openly, frankly and distinctly adverse to it. What right, then, had any one to imply that I would aid in or conform to it?

I deem it unjust in itself, and subversive of political morality; I believe that an adoption of, and adhesion to it, would be mischievous, if not fatal to the democratic party.

If any man should say public events gave good reason to fear that this pernicious policy might obtain an ascendancy in the councils of the administration, and should ask why, in view of that fact, I accepted office, I might be willing to acquiesce in his judgment and to assign that as the very reason of my acceptance. Apprehension that a friend may have hearkened to evil counsels—that he has erred in a degree, and may perchance err more seriously—furnishes no just reason for standing aloof. My political and social morality is to adhere the more firmly, in proportion to the degree in which I conceive my party or my friend to be in danger. The true hearted mariner remains by his ship while a single hope remains. Willing to contribute my little stock of influence toward preventing what I deemed a catastrophe, I stood by the President. He had been, I hoped he would remain, I still believe he will remain, the sheet anchor of the democratic party.

The *Union* says, that in judging the free-soilers to be insincere, there is "a severity that leaves no room for repentance or reformation." This is evading the question. No one objects, or ever can object, to receiving into the ranks of the democratic party any one who will vote for and support it. But the question is whether, in party conventions, and in the dispensation of offices, honors, and rewards, we shall especially recognize as a section of the democratic party the set of men who revolted

against the party and defeated it in '48, whilst they still continue to act as a distinct section, and arrogate to themselves as a merit, the distinctive character which results from the memory of their treason. [I am the negative of this question; others have taken the affirmative. "Time, which at last brings all things even," will decide between us.] The doctrine which repels from the democratic threshold all organized bands of political opponents, presents no opposition to the return of erring brethren. I have shown how the masses who had gone off upon the Buffalo platform could and if permitted would have quietly returned, without form, ceremony, compact or coalition. The same peaceful method of healing differences and reuniting the temporarily severed ties of party association is equally well suited for the timely and early return even of the most distinguished leaders. This latter fact is demonstrated in the case of that eminent citizen Gen'l Dix. He took a very active part in the free-soil movement, among other things running for Governor of this State in conjunction with Gates a whig abolitionist, against the democratic candidates. The course of that gentleman shows the path whereby even the foremost leaders of a rebellious and defeated faction, may easily and quietly reinstate themselves in the confidence, and even in the affections of the original or parent party. From the close of the single ill-starred campaign of the free-soil party, he took no further part in that movement. He sought to return, and as far as depended on himself, he did quietly and unobtrusively return to the democratic ranks. At the next general election, without attempting to keep up any faction or section, he diligently and faithfully worked with the party and for the party, and for its candidates.

He sought to obliterate from the memories of men all traces of his action as a free-soiler, and evidently desired that the fact of his ever having been one should itself be forgotten, instead of making it, as others have done, a mark of distinction, and through the instrumentality of faction and intrigue, a passport to favor. In this righteous object, pursued by this just and proper line of conduct, he would have been perfectly successful but for the lovers of "union and harmony." By recognizing and perpetuating the sections, they have kept fastened to him, in despite of himself, the badge of free-soilism—the stigma of imputed membership in one of the New York sections. The South could not be permitted to forget or even to forgive his errors. Though his atonement had been ample, his old associates could not let him escape. Day by day during the Pierce and King canvass, the free-soil press recounted his speeches

and services as good works of their section. "Mr. J. C.," said they, "and Gen. Dix, and Mr. J. B., made speeches last Tuesday night at, &c. All the work is done by our section." Thus was innocence crucified between two unrepentant thieves upon the fatal tree of free-soilism, and kept constantly hung up in that attitude before the public gaze. The consequences, probably, were most injurious. Common fame reports that the President desired to give this gentleman a seat in his cabinet, and was only deterred from so doing by information that in consequence of his free-soil associations he could not be confirmed in the Senate. It is also stated that a desire existed to favor him in reference to the French mission, and that his preferment was here again prevented by similar means.

I know nothing as to the truth of these suppositions; but, assuming the fact, by way of illustration, we see how injuriously the policy of recognizing sections in the party operates even upon the free-soilers themselves.

No one of them eminent enough to be of value as an associate, will be permitted to separate himself from his faction, or to re-enter the ranks of the original party in a proper and legitimate way.

We are told in the Hon. Secretary's letter that the President has adopted this policy. I trust and believe that the assertion is founded in as great a misapprehension of his real views as seems to exist in relation to the import of the Baltimore platform. I know him to be pure, upright and patriotic; I am sure that under the embarrassments which have surrounded him from the hour of his election, he has exerted a high measure of ability; and if he has not overcome them all, it is from the impracticable nature of the task, and not from any failure on his part, in diligence, mental power, or fidelity to the constitution.

CH. O'CONOR.

NEW YORK, October 17, 1853.

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### Letter from Secretary Guthrie to Greene C. Bronson.

WASHINGTON, OCT. 22, 1853.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 17th inst. It is not my purpose to respond to the many positions of that letter, because most of them bear their contradiction upon its face, and others are too unimportant to require refutation; and also

because, while, in several phrases of it, admitting your implied obligation, as a man of honor, to act in accordance with the known policy of the administration, and, moreover, recognising the propriety and justice of that policy by declaring that you yourself deprecated and endeavored to prevent the divisions now existing in the democratic party in your State, you nevertheless indulged in a tenor of remark, as to various relations of the subject, which not only impugns my motives, but indicates an attitude on your part wholly incompatible with harmonious co-operation between us, and the proper conduct of the business of the government.

One suggestion appears in your letter which demands animadversion. You allege, by implication, that I have desired you to appoint free-soilers to office, and, in doing so, you strangely misunderstand or misinterpret my letter of the 3d instant. I neither entertained nor expressed any such desire. It has been my pleasure and my duty, not to inquire into the opinions which may have been held by yourself and others as far back as the year 1848, but to regard the claims to consideration of all who have acted with fidelity to the principles and organization of the democratic party since the convention at Baltimore in 1852, and those only. And with these views, I must condemn your course when in this letter you inform me that you have selected free-soilers for office, without having given me the notice of the fact, which would have enabled me to withhold my approbation from any such appointments. I will add, that the imputation that I have required you to act with reference to controversies of a local or State character, is wholly gratuitous. My letter was intended to guard you against distinctions between democrats, founded upon local politics and local divisions.

The concluding portion of your letter has left me no alternative but to lay the whole matter before the President and take his direction concerning it.

You assume that in relation to certain things you are to receive instructions from this department, and in others that you are to proceed without, or contrary to such instructions. This cannot be admitted in any branch of the public service; for where the department is not expressly empowered to give instructions to subordinates, it has the authority to do so, as inherent in the power to remove a refractory officer.

You also assume that you are to appoint the various persons employed in the custom house—some as you admit, subject to my approval, and others, as you seem to conceive, on your sole

authority. I cannot but regard it as singular that a gentleman of your legal acquirements and experience should have fallen into such error. The constitution of the United States has empowered Congress to confer the appointment of inferior officers "in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments." Congress has not attempted, nor, if it had, could it have effected any modification of this provision of the Constitution.

Those who are employed under you in the custom-house do, both by the constitution and the laws, derive their appointment and their authority as public officers from the Secretary of the Treasury alone. What the language and temper of your letter would have rendered embarrassing, these unwarrantable assumptions, marked as they are by a manifest spirit of insubordination, render impossible—namely your continuance in the office of Collector of the district of New York. I am, therefore, directed by the President to say that your successor in the office will be promptly appointed.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

GREENE C. BRONSON, ESQ., NEW YORK.

#760

THE ECHO;  
OR  
THE BATTLE OF THE SHELLS,  
A SATIRICAL PARODY IN RHYME  
OF THE  
CELEBRATED LETTERS  
OF  
MESSRS. GUTHRIE, BRONSON & O'CONOR,  
TOGETHER WITH  
THE ORIGINAL LETTERS.

~~~~~  
"VELL MY COVY, VOT'S THE ROWP"
~~~~~

By JOHN PIPER, Esq., &c. &c.

JANUARY:  
1854.







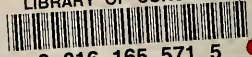








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